



4-H Youth Development

2000 Programs of Excellence

Workforce Preparation

Character at Work

Colorado

Situation

According to the SCANS report, about one half of the high school students in the U.S. leave school without the knowledge or foundation skills required to find or to hold a good job. A panel of business leaders and futurists has ranked ethics as the skill that young people need most. At the same time, survey results show that 46% of high school students say they have stolen something from a store, 70% say they have cheated on an exam, and 92% say they have lied to a parent (Josephson Institute, 2/1998).

Program Description

Responding to an identified need of business owners, Character At Work was designed to present ethical decision-making in the workplace to youth ages 16 to 18 who are entering the workforce. The 1-day program addresses some of the SCANS foundation skills including basic skills (i.e., writing, speaking, listening); thinking skills (reasoning, creativity, decision-making, problem solving); and personal qualities (i.e., responsibility, self-management, sociability, and integrity) of youth entering the workforce for the first time. Through a process of discovery, young people identify the ethical qualities and dimensions of typical situations they might find in the workplace. Active learning experiences and peer interaction guide participants through an ethical decision-making model that supports self-responsibility in making difficult choices.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Evaluation of the curriculum shows high levels of learning about the significance of fundamental ethical principles, self-responsibility, ethical decision-making and their roles in the workplace. Character at Work has been delivered to diverse audiences including military dependents, inner-city youth, juvenile delinquents, youth from rural, isolated communities, and 4-H community club members. Teaching the curriculum

has provided an opportunity for broad-based community groups to discuss youth development issues and concerns, build coalitions, and mobilize action. Character education, ethics and workforce preparation are vital topics to parents and educators who are looking for supportive, non-judgmental curricula to use with adolescents in non-formal educational settings. The Character at Work curriculum includes participatory activities such as case studies, posters, newspaper reviews, journaling, and group discussion.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Two evaluation instruments are included in Character at Work. Facilitators are invited and encouraged to share data with the authors. During the pilot phase of Character at Work, participants (n=74) reported:

Content	Clarity of Presentation 5=very 1=none	Confidence in Ability to Master 5=very 1=none
Understanding the nature of ethics and character	4.01	3.99
Understanding the variety of ethical dilemmas and decisions in the workplace	4.05	3.89
Knowledge of the principles and concepts that must be employed when making ethical decisions	4.14	3.97
Skill in using the ethical decision-making model	4.07	4.36

An oral evaluation activity at the close of Character at Work invites participants to share something they have learned, something they have learned about themselves, something they have learned about others, and a "wild card"—anything they want to say. Some participants said:

- "I'm not as ethical as I would like to be."
- "I'm more ethical than I thought I was."
- "People may appear other than they really are."
- "The program was a good learning experience and encouraged us to

look at our ethical decisions at the workplace an daily life."

- "It was a lot of fun getting to meet new people and learn about character building."

The first printing of 200 copies of Character at Work sold out and a second printing is now being sold. Training of facilitators has been conducted twice in Colorado and once in Nebraska, and additional sessions are under negotiation.

Resource Commitment

Colorado State University Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development specialists in workforce preparation and character education convened a focus group of business people to confirm data ranking ethics as the skill that young people need most. Ethicists and educators from the University of Northern Colorado, including Dr. Michael Jacobs, were consulted and a decision was made to develop curriculum materials to teach ethical decision making to youth ages 16 – 18 entering the workplace. The pilot phase of this initiative was supported by Dr. Dorothy H. Martin, Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development who actively participated in the conceptual planning and early evaluation of the project. Five pilot sites were selected and agents in Denver, El Paso, Grand, and San Miguel Counties cooperated to recruit youth and provide facilities and refreshments. An external evaluator conducted formative evaluations that directed curriculum revisions. This phase of the project was funded in part by an Extension Initiative grant and from funds designated for program evaluation. Character at Work, was submitted for review by the 4-H National Experiential Learning Team. It was accepted and is now recommended for use in all states, counties, and territories. The first printing and facilitator training in Colorado were supported by the Colorado 4-H Youth Fund, Inc. with a grant from the Arthur E. and Helen K. Johnson Foundation.

Collaborators

Character at Work was developed and tested by Colorado State University Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development in collaboration with professors of education and philosophy at the University of Northern Colorado. Cooperative Extension agents were vital partners in arranging pilot groups and facilitating the evaluation process. The National 4-H Youth Development Experiential Learning Design Team was key in suggesting revisions for clarity and accessibility for diverse populations.

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To
 Leadership & Volunteer Development
 4-H/Youth Development

Kansas City 4-H Global Conference

Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Texas

Program Description

The annual Kansas City 4-H Global Conference provides opportunities for youth to explore careers, technology, environment and cultural diversity in a global society. Hands-on and interactive sessions involve youth in examining issues central to their lives, families and communities – thus broadening their understanding of the world around them.

4-H staff and teen facilitators from eight states, including Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Texas coordinate this conference for the 500 youth and chaperons across these states attending the conference. Participants are between the ages of 15 and 18 and are given the opportunity to interact with business leaders, educators, and a diverse group of international people who help them:

Identify emerging work-force needs,

- Gain insights about the global and high-tech work place,
- Provide interaction with diverse ethnic groups,
- Develop career and leadership skills for the corporate workplace, and
- Increase confidence for functioning in a global society of political, economic, religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity.

4-H staff from eight states contribute approximately two FTE's to plan and implement this four-day conference that includes tours, workshops, service learning projects, and cultural awareness experiences. Participants have opportunities to tour and talk with businesses and organizations such as a Federal Reserve Bank, engineering firms, Sprint, Bayer Corporation, and Farmland Industries, social services agencies and many more. Service learning opportunities include a parks department, community outreach centers, and a state park.

Workshops are another important component of the conference that include topics such as HIV/AIDS, technology, international law, environmental planning, how to prepare a resume and more. A special feature of the conference is an Ethnic Enrichment event that includes food, displays/crafts, and entertainment from representatives of 21 countries. Keynote speakers and banquets round out this unique professional experience for youth.

Preparing young people to work and live in a global society means giving them opportunities to explore career choices and talk with professionals in a variety of fields. As jobs become more specialized and technology-driven youth must have opportunities to heighten their awareness of career possibilities. Participants rate their conference experience as highly satisfactory. They identified that meeting new people and learning new things was a critical component of their experience. They enjoyed the *"variety of workshops and tours" and the "opportunities they presented for us to learn in workshops and tours about future careers."*

Funding from multiple corporate and civic entities help support this conference. Major sponsors have included Farmland Industries, Bayer Corporation, the City of Kansas City, and the Kansas City Ethnic Enrichment Commission.

Accomplishments and Impacts

One facet of the conference was to show youth career options they may not have thought about. One of the main points respondents indicated as important to a career was preparation (e.g., *"It made me realize how important preparation is."* *"It taught you how to prepare for a job interview."* and *"It is never too early to prepare for your future."*) Youth learned about different careers they might follow from law to the Air Force. The different training required for each of these careers was described, *"Judge Moran told us some classes we need to try and take before law school," "computer careers," and "they explained what college courses to take if interested in a particular area."* One youth said, *"I learned more about the importance of social workers. If exposed to abuse, take it seriously, report it. I will sign up for a teen-help line."*

When youth were asked what they will do as a result of their experiences at the conference approximately 50% said, they would share the information with others in their communities. Many indicated they would use the information to develop plans for the future. Seventy-eight percent of the youth said, that the workshops/tours changed the way they thought and felt. When asked if the workshops/tours helped them learn about career possibilities and the work force, 63.7% said "yes."

Overall, youth awareness about technology, the environment, diversity, globalization, career preparation, and leadership/citizenship skills increased as a result of the conference. They learned how much preparation is needed when choosing a career and took away a heightened awareness of the career opportunities available to them.

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Careers in Science Education... 4-H Junior Intern Program New Jersey

Situation

Careers in Science Education...4-H Junior Intern Program was designed to meet a need for developing in youth the knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to success in the workplace, while increasing their interest and expertise in various science fields. This program was designed as part of a partnership between New Jersey Audubon's Nature Center of Cape May and the Cape May County 4-H Youth Development Program.

Program Description

Careers in Science Education is an 8-week summer program for 7th – 9th grades youth, which combines hands-on training and practical experiences. Junior interns were matched with the Nature Center's teachers and naturalists who served as mentors. The interns received 16 hours of training and mentors received 4 hours of orientation/training. Two days per week, the interns worked directly with their mentors for a minimum of two hours, assisting with the implementation of the center's Summer Day Camp Program. During this time, they job shadowed naturalist teachers, helped to present activities to younger youth, conducted guided tours and participated in community service projects. This model program provided youth the opportunity to develop essential workplace skills, sample a variety of career options, increase their knowledge and skills in the area of science, and become contributing members of the workforce.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

The Nature Center continues to request this program after three years of implementation. Nature Center staff reported that the interns were instrumental in the success of the Summer Day Camp Program and had a very positive impact on young participants. Each intern donated additional time to

working on special projects and increased their involvement in science education.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Each year, all participants, both interns and mentors, successfully fulfilled their responsibilities and spent over 1000 hours. Junior interns reported that the program provided valuable experiences impacting their career choices, increased their knowledge of environmental and marine science, and developed their interest in working in science education as an intern, volunteer, or in the future as a teacher/naturalist. They indicated that it helped them understand basic techniques of teaching science, increased their public speaking ability, helped develop their management and organizational skills, and provided an opportunity for self-evaluation and personal development. Nature Center staff observed a marked improvement in the skills, sense of responsibility, and performance of the interns from the beginning to the end of the program.

Resource Commitment

Annual contributions from New Jersey Audubon and Rutgers Cooperative Extension at \$750.00 for basic teaching, marine and environmental science references, workforce preparation materials, and a \$50 stipend for each of the interns.

Collaborators

New Jersey Audubon Nature Center of Cape May, City of Cape May, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To

Natural Resources & Environmental Management, Community Resource & Economic Development, Leadership & Volunteer Development

The Reality Store

Kentucky

Program Description

Surveys completed by employers across the state indicate Kentucky has a problem—a big problem. In Louisville, 3500 employers said that two-thirds of their workers need improvement in basic skills: reading, writing and math.

Unfortunately, Kentucky has a long history of young people dropping out of high school or not continuing post secondary education. In 1996, 14 out of every 100 Kentucky teens (ages 16 -19) dropped out of high school. (The national average was 10.) Completion and continuation of education is critical to an employable workforce.

Local communities, with the guidance of Extension agents for 4-H/Youth Development, are administering a "dose of reality" to kids across the state. Kids, mostly middle school youth who can't wait to grow up and live on their own, are stunned when they learn how much it costs to pay taxes, raise a child, and own a home. More than one teen has been overheard saying, "Now I see why my parents can't pay \$125 for my tennis shoes."

"Reality Store," a simulation of the financial demands of adult life, has been an effective wake up call for thousands of youth. The Reality Store is made up of booths for taxes, housing, food, clothing, transportation, child care, health care, etc. Each booth is staffed by adults in the community who work in that particular field. When the young teens arrive, they are given the equivalent of one month's salary for the occupation for which that teen plans to complete an education. The teen is also given a family situation. They visit every booth purchasing child care, insurance, food, etc. By the end of the activity, most youth realize that their educational aspirations will determine their job opportunities. Their job opportunities will determine their salary. Their salary will determine their potential lifestyle.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

In the last year, over 16,000 youth have participated in Reality Store simulations. Most of the youth were middle school students.

Each simulation was staffed by approximately 50 volunteers. They witnessed when kids suddenly realized that the responsibilities of real life are different to what they thought. For many, that was enough for them to continue to support workforce preparation efforts.

The Reality Stores generated flurry to the extent that Kentucky Department of Education specialists called the state 4-H staff to learn more about the simulation and WorkBooks and offered to promote Extension workforce preparation resources in teacher and administrator in-service training offered through the Kentucky Department of Education. One of the Department of Education specialists mentioned that she had interviewed teachers in schools with high assessment scores to see what resources they used which they felt attributed to the high scores. The teachers mentioned the 4-H WorkBooks and

Reality Store.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Upon completion of the Reality Stores, youth (approximately 16,000) completed an evaluation instrument which was conducted by approximately 50 volunteers. Results across the state show that kids are making the connections among choice of career, the education needed and the potential lifestyle one might expect in the chosen career. In Hardin County, a county with a population of 90,000, youth at one Reality Store indicated these results: Eighty-seven percent now have a better idea of what it costs to maintain a household. Eighty-three percent learned a lot about what it costs to raise a child. Ninety percent have an idea of what type of education it takes to get the job they want. Ninety-three percent realized the type of job they have affects how much money they will make. Ninety-four percent learned the amount of money they make will determine their lifestyle. The experience caused youth to consider their future. Sixty-six said they will try harder in school. Eighty-three percent said they are more likely to continue their education after high school. Sixty percent indicated they are likely to delay having children. Eighty-eight percent said they will strive to make wise financial decisions. Seventy-six percent said they are likely to save more money as a result of the Reality Store experience.

Extension's WorkBook project series is another response to workforce needs. "Open Your Eyes to the World of Work" encourages 4th-5th graders to take a good look at people working in their own community, to view the community as a real-life laboratory. At the middle school level, "Scope It Out" activities encourage youth to look at their own interests, careers related to their interests, an employer's expectations, earning potential, lifestyle choices and options for post secondary education. The high school WorkBook, "Jump Start for Job Seekers" offers practical tips on how to find a job. The WorkBook Series requires that young people get out into workplaces to see what the work environment is really like.

Resource Commitment

Local communities provided funds to carry out workforce learning activities. Some operated on a bare-bones budget while others raised funds for booth construction, clip boards, mementos, curriculum (WorkBooks) and meals for those staffing the Reality Store.

Collaborators

Family Resource Centers in public schools, local Chambers of Commerce, school teachers and administrators, local businesses, School to Work Partnership Councils

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To

Community Resource and Economic Development
Family Development and Resource Development

Leaders-In-Training

New Hampshire

Program Description

New Hampshire 4-H Camps offer a newly revised and renewed counselor-in-training program and renamed it Leaders-In-Training (LIT)! This program is designed for teens, ages 14-16 years, who are interested in higher education and employment in recreation, education, social work, or other youth-related careers. The program is open to any teen who expresses an interest in the content of the program, with an emphasis given to youth at-risk and those with special needs, who otherwise might be at risk for underemployment. The program is not designed to train youth to be next summer's camp counselors at NH 4-H Camps, but rather to help youth explore their career and educational options in the field of youth development, using the camp environment as the delivery mechanism. The youth benefit from being immersed in a positive youth development system while learning skills which can be applied to any employment situation. Camp benefits by having older youth intensely involved in a challenging program and inspiring the younger campers to strive for the same goals.

The program is marketed through the summer camp brochure. This is distributed to many social service agencies throughout the state. Recruitment also occurs at Family Camp Fairs, at which the Camp Director and Extension Specialist attend and promote the program.

Stakeholder Satisfaction

LITs participate in a four-week residential program, meeting weekly from Sunday afternoon through Friday afternoon. The LITs go home each weekend, returning to camp on Sunday. During the week, the participants are involved in a highly structured program, with an emphasis on opportunities to learn about themselves, youth development, good work habits, all while working as cooperative team. Specific components of the curriculum include training in CPR and first aid, waterfront safety, program leadership, team building activities, living with a camper group, University of New Hampshire campus tour,

interviewing techniques and mock interviews, performance evaluations, and learning how to plan their free time appropriately and as a group. The entire experience is culminated through 1-2 outside work experiences, in addition to the supervised work they do at NH 4-H Camps. The LITs go to other camps where they shadow staff and work in the activity areas. This allows the LITs the opportunity to compare and contrast the camps, their strengths and weaknesses in different situations, and provide the supervisory staff a chance to view the LITs in an unfamiliar and therefore more challenging environment. Through this collaborative effort with other camps, NH 4-H Camps is able to provide its LITs with a comprehensive training program, linking the LITs with other options for employment in their communities.

An emphasis is placed on personal responsibility for participation in the program. All LITs sign a Behavioral Contract prior to participation in the program, which is then strictly adhered to as the LITs are supervised by the Program Coordinator and Camp Director. The understanding of personal responsibility for behavior, choices, and attitude helps to instill positive work skills.

Accomplishments and Impacts

Of twelve LITs enrolled in the first four week session, eleven completed the program. In this group, five have returned to volunteer in various capacities at camp. In the second session, all twelve completed the program. Follow-up with the LITs after the program ends consists of providing them with listings of camps in their geographical area and a certificate summarizing their accomplishments in the program for use as a reference. All this information is kept in each LIT file, thus allowing NH 4-H Camps to keep accurate records of their individual performance for future employment opportunities.

Feedback regarding this program has centered around specific accomplishments the youth have achieved (i.e., completing CPR training and receiving a certificate), displaying more mature and responsible behavior when returning home, and positive comments on the performance of the LITs who returned as volunteers after completion of their program. The program has not existed long enough to evaluate the employability of the youth upon completion of the program, but such data will be available within the next three years.

Resource Commitment

The program this year was funded internally, and primarily consisted of hiring a program coordinator who has extensive experience working with adolescents and in a camp setting.

Collaborators

NH 4-H Camps worked closely with three other camps to provide supervised work experiences for the LITs: Camp Wildcat on the campus of the University of New Hampshire, Camp Lincoln, operated by the YMCA, and Lion's Camp Pride, operated by the Lion's Club.

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To

4-H Youth Development
